

enough to sustain a population of three million for 300 years. In its current state, brackish water is useless and undrinkable but once it is pumped up, desalinated, and put to use, it can be added incrementally to our dwindling supplies of lakes, rivers and streams.

Our communities could greatly benefit from investments in desalinization technology, which would activate our brackish water resources and create a new water supply for our municipalities, businesses and industries. I have visited international communities with fewer available water resources at their discretion, but they have flourished by employing new technology to better manage their limited water resources. New Mexico should follow this example.

In my discussions with water experts and researchers, they have identified areas where New Mexico can take immediate action to better manage our existing water resources. Investing in new irrigation methods can save about 40 percent of water being applied to the fields. Providing more funding and technical assistance for the rehabilitation of old water infrastructure can conserve water by eliminating leaks while also creating more jobs for New Mexicans.

New Mexico can and should be the next innovation hub for water management technology. But in order to achieve this, we have to continue forming partnerships between the public, government, and the private sector. We also have to continue investing in water technology research initiatives that will show us how to better manage existing water resources and will allow us to unlock alternative new water resources.

Mr. Speaker, I eagerly anticipate the input from my constituents and colleagues as we set a dynamic course that will demonstrate to the region, the country and the world that New Mexico can respond to adversity and become a leader in water resources management.

HONORING THE CAMERON YOE HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TEAM

HON. BILL FLORES

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Cameron Yoe High School on their back-to-back Texas 2A Division 1 football state championship wins.

On December 19, 2013 the Yoemen played in the state championship against Wall High School and defeated them 35–14.

The game was tied 14–14 at the half, during the third and fourth quarters the Yoemen persevered and claimed their third state championship title in school history and the second title in two years.

The Yoemen defense shutout Wall in the second half and the offense would go on to put another 21 points on the scoreboard.

Under the direction of Coach Rick Rhoades, the Yoemen completed the season with a 15 091 overall record.

The championship was won as a result of both the players' and coaches' hard work and dedication to their football program.

I congratulate Coach Rhoades on the victory that wouldn't have been possible without his guidance and the devotion from his players and fans.

Mr. Speaker, before I close I just want to say congratulations to an outstanding Texas District 17 high school football team, coaching staff, and community.

Go Yoemen!

TRIBUTE TO KELSIE MILLER

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of Kelsie Miller of Urbandale, Iowa for receiving a coveted Fulbright award to study and conduct research abroad this academic year.

The Fulbright Program is sponsored by the United States Department of State, Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs. This program is known as America's flagship international exchange program. First established by Congress in 1946, the Fulbright Program has served the purpose of building mutual understanding between American citizens and the rest of the world. Appropriations from the United States Congress, participating foreign governments, and private sector contributions fund the Fulbright Program. The program has exchanged over a quarter of a million people in more than 155 countries, since its inception. Kelsie's host country for the 2013–2014 academic year is Indonesia.

To receive a Fulbright award is truly a great honor. Recipients of this award must demonstrate significant leadership potential in their chosen field and are selected on the basis of their academic or professional achievement. The experiences provided by this program ensure that tomorrow's leaders are both knowledgeable about the world and well-rounded.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent future leaders like Kelsie from the great State of Iowa in the United States Congress. I know my colleagues in the House will join me in congratulating her for receiving this prestigious award and I wish her the best of luck in her studies and future career.

SPACE LAUNCH LIABILITY INDEMNIFICATION EXTENSION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 15, 2014

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the FY14 Omnibus Appropriations bill. This is not perfect legislation. It falls far short of the funding levels necessary to make vital investments in education, scientific research, and infrastructure that we need to ensure our nation will remain at the cutting edge of the global economic competition. However, it is a significant improvement over the immediate and deep cuts we would have faced under sequestration and allows us to make important choices about our budget priorities.

Today's bill makes vital investments in children and families. While it does not include the President's full early childhood education proposal, it gives a major boost to Head Start and Early Head Start and continues funding

for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant. It includes enough funding for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children to meet the need in the coming year. However, while it brings funding for K–12 and special education grant programs almost up to pre-sequestration levels, we need a far greater investment in these programs to keep our promise to America's children.

The bill also increases funding for scientific research at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Institutes of Standards and Technology, and the Department of Energy Office of Science. However, while it provides a significant increase for the National Institutes of Health, it does not completely repair the damage done by sequestration and continues to underfund vital research for lifesaving cures. Funding also falls short at the National Science Foundation. These are investments that we must make in the future to remain competitive in the global economy.

The bill also includes full funding for important safety and reliability improvements at WMATA, an essential investment for my constituents and for the federal government, which relies on the system to bring thousands of employees to work every day. It includes \$70 million for the Chesapeake Bay Program to restore the health of a resource that is critical to the environment and economy in my home state of Maryland.

However, I am disappointed that the bill continues to fund Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) at a level above the Pentagon's request. My colleague Representative MICK MULVANEY and I worked on a bipartisan basis to remove this excess funding during consideration of the defense budget in the House and in the final FY14 Defense Authorization bill. At a time when we are stretching every dollar to meet our nation's needs, we should not create a slush fund for unrequested defense spending.

I also continue to oppose the inclusion of many unnecessary policy riders, such as those related to the District of Columbia and Guantanamo, that are regularly added to appropriations bills.

Today's legislation includes security assistance for Egypt. While Egypt and the United States maintain a longstanding partnership, the Egyptian government must work towards a peaceful democratic transition. I encourage the President to condition the release of aid on progress toward an inclusive, democratic government that strengthens human rights and the rule of law.

Finally, today's bill includes a much-needed and much-deserved one percent cost-of-living increase for the 230,000 wage grade federal employees—an issue I've raised as necessary to ensure fairness among public servants. It also includes a provision contained in legislation I introduced with my colleague Representative MIKE THOMPSON, H.R. 3808, that exempts medically retired personnel and survivor benefit plan annuitants from the temporarily reduced cost-of-living-adjustment provisions of the recently-passed budget agreement.

Mr. Speaker, no legislation is perfect, particularly one of this magnitude. However, this bill represents an important compromise that will move us forward, provide more certainty, and prevent another costly, unnecessary government shutdown. I urge my colleagues to support it.